

Proposed Goldie Logs Timber Sale

Project Update

Montana Department of Natural Resources & Conservation
Southwest Land Office - Missoula Unit



Aug 1, 2021

In December 2020, the Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC), Trust Land Management Division (TLMD), Missoula Unit announced a proposal to begin exploring the possibility of developing and implementing a timber sale in the Gold Creek area east of Missoula, Montana. Since the project was originally scoped, public comments were received and DNRC staff completed considerable field work in the project area. The purpose of this notice is to update the public on project development since the last scoping period, summarize a sample of issues that were identified using public comments, and update the public on project development.

Updates to Proposed Project

DNRC will prepare an Environmental Assessment. We anticipate the document to be released to the public in the Fall of 2021.

Throughout this summer, DNRC specialists and foresters gathered data in the Goldie Logs project area. Due to their on the ground observations and new data gathered during project development, DNRC has refined the proposed action within the project area (please refer to the attached map). DNRC is still gathering information and will incorporate new information as we begin to finalize the proposed action and associated environmental analysis.

Crews have started to “mark” or paint the proposed action prescription within the project area. Marking is conducted by foresters, technicians, and specialists. Trees are marked with paint at breast height to indicate to a potential purchaser which trees would be harvested, or which trees would be retained. In addition, harvest boundaries and other boundaries such as SMZs or streamside management zones are marked as well. The marking “scheme” can be thought of as a legend or a key to understand the colors and types of marks within the proposed project area. Below is the marking scheme(s) being used in the proposed Goldielogs Project Area. Two different paint schemes are being used; marked to leave within the proposed cable yarding units, and a two-paint scheme within the ground-based yarding units.

Section Lines (Ownership Boundaries) – 3 striped, red paint with red flagging (blazes are marked red as well)

Unit Boundaries – 3 striped, purple paint with blue flagging

SMZ (streamside management zone) boundaries – 2 dot orange with florescent orange or florescent pink flagging
Designated cut trees within the SMZ – orange stripe at breast height

Proposed Cable Yarding Units

All species >8” diameter at breast height (DBH)

Blue stripe at breast height – leave tree

No mark on tree – cut/harvest tree

Proposed Ground-based Yarding Units CUT/LEAVE by species

Western larch and ponderosa pine– Marked to cut

Orange stripe at breast height – cut/harvest tree

No mark on tree – leave tree

All other species >8" diameter at breast height (DBH)

Douglas-fir, Engelmann spruce, lodgepole pine, subalpine fir, and may include others

Blue stripe at breast height – leave tree

No mark on tree – cut/harvest tree

Public Participation Summary

Prior to this update, DNRC sent out a scoping notice to interested parties for the proposed Goldie Logs Timber Sale.

Although there was a specific comment period, DNRC encouraged the public to submit comments at any time during the MEPA process.

Since the comment period closed, DNRC has received comments from 18 interested individuals.

Below is a sampling of issues raised during the scoping process. Similar comments from multiple individuals were grouped together into general issues. This list is not exhaustive but reflects the most predominant issues we identified in the comment letters to date. The ID Team will address *all* of the comments we have received in the Environmental Analysis.

Transportation - new road construction, increase in the amount of road in the project area.

Aesthetics- impacts to view shed resulting from road construction and timber harvesting.

Vegetation – spread of noxious weeds, old growth forest types, prescriptions used.

Wildlife – decreased security cover, disturbance to migrations patterns, disturbance by harvest activities, habitat loss due to harvest activities.

Soils, Hydrology & Fisheries – detrimental soil disturbance, increased erosion rates from new road construction, potential sediment delivery to stream systems.

Economics – economic viability of the project and transparency.

Recreation – displacement of recreationists during logging, harvest adversely affecting user experience.

How can I stay informed?

A project website has been established to help facilitate communication of project details and timelines, project maps and forthcoming environmental documents. You can find the project website at [<http://dnrc.mt.gov/divisions/trust/forest-management/goldielogs-timber-sale-information>]. If you would like your contact information included on the projects interested parties list, please submit your contact information to the project leader listed below.

Scott Allen, Project Leader/Forester

ATTN: Goldie Logs Timber Sale

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Thank you for your continued interest and participation in the management of state Trust Lands.

Sincerely,

Scott Allen

Missoula Unit Forester



Goldielogs Timber Sale Proposed Project Map

